



## Radioactive Material Incident Synopsis

On Wednesday, October 7, 1987, two small containers labeled as radioactive material were found at the Arkansas Chemical facility by ERCS personnel. The following synopsis details the chain of events from the time that the radioactive material was first discovered through the time that the method of its disposal was resolved.

October 7, 1987

1045: ERCS recovery technicians discovered two small containers in the second floor laboratory of building #30A. The containers were both labeled as the isotope H3 and were placarded with the radioactive material "insignia". As soon as this material was discovered the ERCS response manager and the EPA OSC were informed immediately and subsequently all activities were ceased on the second floor of building #30A until further notice. TAT on site phones TAT office to inform them that a radiac would be needed on site immediately to perform background monitoring.

1230: TAT arrives on site with the radiac unit but upon further discussions it is decided that the TAT Health and Safety officer should be notified before any entries can be made. Upon notification by on site TAT, the TAT HSD reports that he would be coming up to the site. The OSC informs the EPA HSD of the present situation and he states that he will be coming up to the site as well.

1330: TAT HSD phones site to inform personnel that the material in question (H3) is a beta emitter and thus relatively harmless; Level C personal protection would be more than sufficient. The HSD then informs TAT personnel that he would not be coming up to site but would send a member of TAT with a beta detector.

1400: Tat arrives on site with alpha and beta detector.

1405: EPA HSD arrives on site with alpha and beta detector.

1420-1500: EPA and TAT make Level B entry into building #30A to investigate radioactive material both visually and with radiation detecting instruments. EPA's instrument has beta and alpha detection capabilities, TAT's instrument has beta and gamma detection capabilities, neither of the instruments showed any readings above background. Visual observations revealed the following information: both containers were plastic boxes of about 1.5 inches in length and contained viles and metal/plastic objects, one box was labeled June 1972 and the other was labeled November 1970, both boxes were labeled as being 250 microrems of H3.

1500-1700: 1) Based upon all information obtained thus far it is decided that no danger exists on the second floor of building #30A from the radioactive material. OSC requests that ERCS personnel securely store material in a packed drum and relocate it to a more isolated area on site (consistent with ERCS/OHM policy in situations of this nature, as per ERCS response manager). 2) EPA OSC initiates the coordination of radioactive material disposal with Radiation Branch

of U.S. EPA.

October 8, 1987

0915: Phone conversation between OSC and EPA Radiation Branch: based upon the nature and amount of the material found (H3 or Tritium) there is absolutely no danger of exposure, the action limit requiring Level C protection is at least 324 times the amount found on site.

October 9, 1987

0935: Phone conversation between OSC and EPA Radiation Branch: the Radiation Branch will arrange for disposal of the material through a low level radiation waste broker in the area.